

1568/1069.

A N
A D D R E S S
T O T H E
People of *England*;

In which the CONDUCT of
Lieut. Gen. Lord *George Sackville*
Is properly considered;

At once to silence, by the Voice of Truth, the Cries
of Falshood, Scurrility, and Dulness.

——— *The People imagine a vain Thing.*



L O N D O N :

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A N

A D D R E S S

T O T H E

PEOPLE of ENGLAND.



If exalted rank be in some measure an object to attract the eyes of envy, in so much, as that those persons who are born to it, derive from thence an advantage superior to what generally falls to the bulk of mankind, by being empowered to display their virtues, and exert their abilities, in the fairest and most conspicuous light.

On the other hand, the possessors of it are certainly no less the objects of compassion, as they lie most open to the censure and malignity of perverse and violent dispositions, who are continually on the watch, to try if they can take them at any unguarded hour making a false step ; and are ever ready to lay hold of their faults, nay, their very errors, to pull them down, and reduce them to a level with the herd of the community.

In this, no doubt, those people whose birth and fortune have placed them in the vales, rather than on the eminences of life, are infinitely to be envied before them, and may justly hug themselves in that inferiority, which, while it renders them less distinguished, renders them at the same time more free, more safe, and more befriended.

But if men in trust and power were only to answer for their faults and errors (though even then, I doubt, there would be very
often

often more of the spirit of malice, than justice, in their prosecutors and accusers) there would be very little room either to plead in their favour, or commiserate their sufferings: since even errors themselves may be attended with such fatal consequences, as, in the eye of a state, to place them in the light of the highest, and most atrocious malefactions.

But is this really the case? and are faults and errors all that men in such conditions have to avoid, and guard against? alas! by no means: the slightest breath of rumour, is sometimes sufficient to raise such a storm against them, as nothing but their lives can pacify. To be suspected, is to be guilty; and from that moment their high stations are only considered as so many pillories, where they stand more fully exposed to the scoffs and cruelty of an enraged populace.

In such circumstances, even where demerit is acknowledged, humanity would be
apt

apt to separate the crime from the man, and while the justice must be approved, shudder at the punishment. But what must be his thoughts, I would be glad to know, (supposing him first to be possessed of that same virtue humanity) who should not only see the blameless, but the praise-worthy, treated after this manner, like the vilest delinquent? I am sure his heart must be steeled with more than common brutality, who, in such circumstances, did not sympathize with Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE, and be as forward to discourage, as he would be backward to lend assistance, or foment the outrages of such an injurious rabble.

If the writer of this address should own that he has had the honour of being in company more than *once* with Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE, it would be afterwards in vain for him to assert that he was not prejudiced in his favour; for it is one among the many extraordinary advantages possessed by that nobleman, that as none but strangers
to

to him are his enemies, so nobody who has ever been acquainted with him but must be his friend : and perhaps if he did not know his Lordship to be one of the most humane, the most generous, and most honourable men in the world, the least apt to commit injuries, and the most ready to pardon them, he might not now be employing a pen in his defence : though at the same time he could not help being perfectly sensible, that in the present charge against him, no man living was ever more unjustly censured.

It would be needless to observe here, and endless to enumerate, the many various forms in which the spawn of Grub-street have escaped from their garrets, since the first appearance of those so very *extraordinary* orders and acknowledgements of Prince FERDINAND OF BRUNSWICK.

No sooner were they made public, and the world began to imagine from thence that a general officer, and that no less a one
than

than the commander in chief of his majesty's forces, had misbehaved in Germany, than the sewers of falshood and scurrility were immediately broken up, and such heaps of filth and rubbish came down the kennels of dulness, as deluged the whole town.

Every stale conjecture, every dead scandal ; all the excrements of folly, and the stinking offals swept from coffee and beer-houses, have from that time to this been wafted about in pamphlets, equally to the disgrace of human wit, decency, and common-sense.

However, it is by no means strange, I grant, that such compositions should be written ; a corrupt heart, a weak head, or an empty stomach, may easily account for that : but how such compositions should be read, I own, appears to me not a little extraordinary ; for I am unwilling to ascribe it to a mere lust for personal slander.

It

It is really surprizing to see how perpetually and how successfully the public are deceived upon those occasions, by malicious or indigent scribblers ; a set of wretches, in my opinion, infinitely more contemptible than the pickpockets that ply about the streets : neither one nor the other owing any thing to ingenuity, but merely to the *use of their hands* ; however, there is this difference in favour of the latter, that he may rob you, without being obliged at the same time to do an injury to another, in order to bring it about.

The anonymous libeller is not only a robber in the worst degree, (*he that filches from us our good name*) but does all in his power to become a murderer also, by raising a popular clamour, to which the blood of the innocent is too often made a sacrifice.

Were the bluntness of their weapons, indeed, any security from being wounded

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by those stabbers in the dark, there is no man but what would smile at their attacks ; but they are often found to mangle in such a manner, as to render the wounds they give incurable.

Neither the insipidity of their nonsense, the known falsehood of their aspersions, the hackneyed arguments which they make use of ; nor, in short, all the apparent marks of ignorance and imposture which they carry, is sufficient to prevent their productions from being raked into, and the contents not only remembered but repeated ; not only considered with patience, but swallowed with avidity.

Is it not then a deplorable case, that there should be no defence from the venom of such reptiles ? Is their dirt to be their security ? and shall they be suffered, unmolested, to crawl from every hole and corner,
and

and shed their poisonous filth upon all characters, however sacred and respectable.

But there is one way which those scribblers have of injuring a person, who, either through misapprehension, or misfortunes, become the object of public inquiry, that is almost peculiar to themselves:—the way I mean is, by defending them.

This at first view seems a good-natured, a justifiable, and not only so, but a praiseworthy attempt: but if we consider that those people, in every respect, are absolutely incapable of performing the task they undertake, that they are not only totally in the dark, with regard to the truth of facts, by which means they are obliged, either to give the hackneyed reports of the town, or invent absurdities out of their own heads, which they also want the arts of argument to qualify. If we consider this, I say, and that a weak defence is worse than none,

we shall find, that the friend and the enemy is equally pernicious, and their flaver as dangerous as their bite.

But this is not all, those people frequently write a defence only to make work for themselves, by answering it again, which they usually do in two or three days after it comes out, with all the impudence and invective imaginable : nay, I have been assured, that in some late occurrences a printer has had, at one and the same time, two pamphlets in the press upon different sides of the question, which were both written by one man, and designed to be popped out in the manner above-mentioned.

The trade of pamphleteering has never, within my recollection, been carried on in a manner more extensive than at present ; nor do I remember, that the dealers in it were ever more abominable cheats. I dwell the longer upon this article, therefore, to cau-

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tion the public against being cajoled, and taken in, by such impostors for the future.

For I doubt not but many well-meaning people have been led to imagine, that when they gave their sixpence or shilling for this or that Defence, Letter, or Scrutinization, they were going to dip into something, which came directly from the fountain-head: whereas, I can assure them, that nothing genuine has yet appeared in print with relation to the conduct of a late noble general: his accusers and defenders are alike both unknown to, and unemployed by him; and I dare swear their productions have alike flowed from the same source, the mercenary pens of uninterested, uninstructed scribblers.

I could not help smiling the other day, when upon going into a coffee-house, one of the first things I cast my eyes upon after having sat down, was a pamphlet entitled, *A Letter to a late Noble Commander of the British Forces in Germany.* I had

I had the curiosity to cast my eyes over it, and that being satisfied, was about to lay it down again; but my opposite neighbour, who, by his dialect, I found to be a Scotsman, stopping my hand, cried, "Weel, Sir, what think you o' yon pawmphlet?" I gave him such an answer as I thought most pertinent to the question he asked me, and he proceeded.

"Egode Sir, (quo' he) let me tell you its a smart weel written piece, and he was e'en a d----'d clever fellow that pend it." Aye, thought I, a phenomenon, as your countryman M'Ruthen says. I suppose, Sir, said I, you are acquainted with the author then: pray, who might the gentleman have been?

"Hoot man, (quo' he) dinna ye ken that?" Egode, I think the steel's e'en enough to point him out till any one." I signified my want of apprehension to distinguish by that token, and the obligations I should lie under to him, if he would condescend to inform my want of judgment.

Upon

Upon which, rising from his seat, stretching himself over the table, and thrusting his nose in my ear, "What think you of maister," (here he mentioned the name of the greatest man in England, both for worth and abilities) "Tak it from me, Sir, (added he) "most people repute him to be the o'ther "o'it; and I think 'tis ne much unleek "his manner."

I was too prudent to drop a word that might tend to invalidate the judgment of so profound a critic: without attempting, therefore, to obviate what my North Briton advanced, I took my hat, and leaving him in quiet possession of his opinion, immediately went to purchase the pamphlet, intending to give it a thorough and more serious perusal.

This I have since done, and indeed the gentleman sets out with such a gravity in his stile, and his profession of zeal for the honour

nour and welfare of his country ; which he assures the noble person he has thought proper to direct his letter to, is the only thing that prompts him to such a proceeding, is delivered with such an air of being *some body*, that if, from many signs I did not discover him to be *no body*, (as the phrase is) or what's the same thing, a hired scribbler, I might perhaps be tempted to imagine he was a man of consequence, or *any body*—but the person mentioned by my coffee-house politician.

This writer puts me in mind of a piece of great humour, often practised by some droll fellows, who send several large packets by the general post, directed to different people: they pay the postage (which is by this means increased) very willingly, hoping it has brought them something material ; but when they come to open their letters, behold you, they find nothing but *two or three sheets of scribbled papers*.

I cannot help transcribing and commenting upon a few paragraphs from this intelligent correspondent's very genteel and florid epistle.

‘ No one can condemn the zeal which
 ‘ inspires us with resentment against delin-
 ‘ quents, who betray the honour, and abandon the interest of their country. The
 ‘ principle is noble ; “ but we certainly
 “ ought to be careful in what manner we
 “ direct it. Our indignation should not
 “ transport us so far as to take facts for
 “ granted, before they are proved in a legal
 “ examination.”

To this let me add, that it is not the part of an honest man, to propagate the report of such facts. To pick up all the rash rumours that fly about a town, in relation to an affair, the truth of which he knows nothing of, and do all in his power to give them weight and consequence, by his grave manner of recapitulating them.

After paying a just, though somewhat fustian, compliment to the troops sent by the government to Germany, he tells his Lordship, " that the command of these chosen bands devolved upon him."

" Had the public choice directed the appointment, perhaps no one could have been found more likely to discharge the important duty with HONOUR, SKILL, and FIDELITY. Descended from one of the noblest stocks in the kingdom ; one eminently distinguished for loyalty ; and yourself honoured with the confidence of your sovereign, *who could suspect you of Disaffection ?* Having been tried in action, and your firmness extolled, *who could doubt your courage ?* of which it is said, you bear honourable marks, where it is a soldier's pride to shew them — in your breast. From the proofs you had given of your abilities here, and in a neighbouring kingdom, *who could doubt your capacity ?*"

It

It is worthy of memorial, that every circumstance in this paragraph, relative to Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE, is literally true : his very enemies are obliged to own it.

He has been at once the favourite of his sovereign, the hope of his own noble family, and a person equally esteemed and admired by the public. His courage has been tried in more than one action, in which it has been found so far from wanting, that he has rather been apt to run into danger more than was necessary.—He has been wounded several times.

His abilities have been, and are so universally acknowledged, that it would look like a piece of fulsome flattery to mention them here. And yet this writer would fain bring him under the suspicion of either DISSAFFECTION, COWARDICE, or ERROR in JUDGMENT, or all three ; which he says, “Circumstances declare him culpable “ of, and that in such a degree, as to leave

“ no excuse that offers itself to an unbiased judgment.”

Certainly this writer must be an admirable logician, who has such a happy knack of assigning causes for effects: nor can we enough admire how subtly he treats his subject, and with what nice dexterity he preserves the see-saw in the arrangement of his arguments.

He informs my Lord (in great friendship) what the world reports of him; and what facts, notoriously public, afford more than grounds to suspect, is true. Thus, says he (in heroics) “ *The tongue of public report tells the black tale against you.*”

“ It is said that on the first of August,
“ when the confederate army was drawn up
“ against the forces of France, &c. on that
“ signal day when the action grew warm,
“ and became worthy of your interposition,
“ it is said that his Highness Prince
“ Fer-

“ Ferdinand, the commander in chief, dis-
 “ patched one of his aids de camp to you,
 “ with orders for you to attack a particu-
 “ lar body of the enemy’s troops.

“ Instead of an instant compliance with
 “ these orders, it is reported, you hesitated,
 “ and at length intimated, that there must
 “ be some mistake in the delivery, or in-
 “ junction of these orders. On the aid de
 “ camp’s persisting to repeat them, it is
 “ said, (which I own is scarce credible)
 “ that your confusion carried you so far,
 “ that you inconsiderately asked the aid de
 “ camp, whether the orders he brought
 “ were in writing.

“ Upon his answering, with some sur-
 “ prize, in the negative, you are farther
 “ reported to have added, That you would
 “ speak to the Prince yourself. Before you
 “ could find an opportunity of addressing
 “ his Highness, however, the occasion for
 “ which your service was required was irre-
 “ trievably lost, &c. &c.”

Thus

Thus does this man proceed in bringing a horrid charge against his lordship, founded on popular report ; but he has not done yet.—He adds,

“ When the conduct and valour of the
“ confederate army, though not second-
“ ed by your endeavours, had repulsed
“ the enemy, and routed their forces, his
“ Highness, we are told, again sent to you
“ by another of his aids de camp, and or-
“ dered you to pursue the flying party of
“ the enemy.

“ To these orders, likewise, you are
“ supposed to have refused obedience. The
“ reasons affirmed to have been given by
“ you in justification of your refusal, no
“ less disgrace your capacity, than your re-
“ fusal itself seems to distinguish your cou-
“ rage, or your integrity.

“ You are said to have answered the aid
“ de camp, who brought you orders for
“ the

“ the pursuit, that you was a stranger to
 “ the road, and unacquainted with the
 “ passes. Had this weak answer con-
 “ tained the least apology for your disobey-
 “ dience, yet the supposed reply of the
 “ aid de camp, stripped you even of the
 “ shadow of an excuse, it is asserted, that
 “ he offered to shew you the way himself,
 “ and conduct you with safety.

“ Thus driven to extremity, and left
 “ without the slightest pretence for disobey-
 “ ing the orders you had received, is it to
 “ be believed that you still demurred, and
 “ pushed your expostulations to the verge
 “ of mutiny? The answer that public ru-
 “ mour has put in your mouth is indeed in-
 “ credible. It is affirmed, that persisting
 “ in your disobedience, after long hesitation,
 “ you declared, that you did not think it
 “ adviseable to hazard his majesty's troops.

“ *Such is the shocking and dismal light in*
 “ *which your conduct is represented.*” A
 shocking

shocking and dismal light indeed ! and only with this one favourable circumstance attending it, THAT IT IS NOT TRUE.

It now follows that I consider this affair in the light it has come to me. I shall be actuated in so doing by nothing but truth and justice.

I. From the time that Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE took upon himself the command of the forces in Germany, (or at least for a considerable time before the battle of Minden) the general in chief had not favoured him with any mark of his confidence : he never thought proper to ask his opinion upon any occasion, or to signify to him so much as his general plan of operation. This behaviour was without the smallest provocation given, or any reason assigned.

Quere, Whether any cause, which came within the verge of honourable sufferance, could be assigned, sufficient to authorize this
conduct

conduct in the general of one nation's forces to that of an ally, circumstanced with regard to each other, as were his Serene Highness and Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE; whether, if the latter had acted amiss in so heinous a manner, the affair should not have been properly represented, that he might have been recalled? and whether, whilst nothing was found fault with, behaving towards him with disrespect, was not an affront to his country, with regard to a man of his abilities, rank, and fortune, a proceeding absolutely unparalleled, and more to the reproach of the person that offered the injury, than to the person who received it?

II. On the evening before the great event, when some intelligence must have been received relating to the intended attack, the British general was left entirely to his own conjectures, as he received no information whatever from the Prince.

Query, Considering the very important command which Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE was supposed to hold in the confederate army, whether this was prudent with regard to that good understanding which was so necessary to be kept up between the two generals, in order to render the operations of the battle successful: but, considering Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE's avowed skill in the art of war, whether any general in chief, (his Serene Highness excepted) would not, by acting in such a manner, have laid himself open to the censure of self-sufficiency, or being wanting to himself? and whether this did not render it absolutely necessary for Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE to watch over his own conduct, with great circumspection, nothing being left for him but to obey the orders of his superior with the utmost strictness?

III. The first order he received during the battle, was to advance with all the cavalry, *which was immediately complied with,*
and

and the men marched with all possible expedition, when a second order arrived to charge with the British squadrons ONLY. This naturally produced a doubt, and an enquiry, which of the officers was *last* dispatched; when it appeared that they both set out *together*, but that one had outstripped the other by passing through a wood : yet, tho' *contradictory*, each was *positive* in what he delivered. His lordship then desired to be conducted to the Prince, to receive orders from his own mouth, and galloped off for that purpose. The men, after a few minutes stop, being ordered to pursue their *first* destination, when he returned from the Prince, he put himself at the head of the troops, and used his utmost efforts to come up with the enemy, but the infantry had intirely repulsed, and driven them to Minden.

Query, Whether if this be the positive and impartial truth, Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE must not, in the eyes of all equitable

judges, be acquitted of every misdemeanor? for, in the first place it appears, that when the first orders came, he did not hesitate a moment to obey his Highness's command. In the second place it appears, that when the second orders came, which were materially different from the preceding, he only delayed to ask a question, absolutely necessary for him to have answered, viz. Which of the aids de camp set out last? And the propriety of this question is manifest, by its appearing (upon his asking it) that both the aids de camp had set out at the same time; and each positively persisted, that he had brought the order that was to be followed. How would, or could any man man have acted in such circumstances? Had not Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE all the reason in the world, from his Serene Highness's conduct towards him, to think himself highly interested in the clearing up of this point. For though his Highness would have been too generous, to be sure, to make use of such an opportunity, yet no man of common

mon prudence, or foresight, would chuse to put it into the power of a person (of whose friendship he was not very well convinced) to accuse him (if he pleased) of disobedience of orders, or error in judgment. And how was this to be avoided? — only by taking the orders immediately from the Prince himself. And to shew that the necessity of this caution was not merely ideal, upon applying to him, his lordship found that the *first* orders were right ; and yet, had not he received that information from indisputable authority, instant thought would naturally have led him to follow the *last* : so that what happened was unavoidably occasioned by the confusion that attended the orders that were sent. And wherever the cause of that is found, there must the blame be laid.

IV. His lordship dined the day after the battle with the captain-general, who did not throw out the least insinuation against his conduct, which, if arraigned, might then have been cleared upon the spot.

Query,

Query, Whether in consequence of this, the orders and thanks which were afterwards publicly given, and in which Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE was so remarkably omitted, and pointed out, do not carry too much the air of personal pique? Whether they were not unprecedented? And whether the greatest man of his Serene Highness's family, who is also one of the first and best men in Europe, would have behaved, in a manner equally exceptionable, to the meanest centinel in his army?

I shall not attempt to invalidate the charge of cowardice, venality, disaffection, and I know not what, that have been laid to the charge of this young nobleman, in consequence of his having acted as above stated.

Neither shall I take notice of that invidious attempt to throw this affair into the same light with the unfortunate admiral Byng's. All just and honest men (to which, and
which

which only, I direct this address) will see, and must be convinced, how little room there is for either one or the other.

Yet let me take notice of one thing more in the already-quoted letter-writer. All his account of the second orders of pursuing, the messenger's behaviour thereon, and his Lordship's answer thereto, are rank falsehoods, without even the weakest foundation.

He says, speaking of the orders and compliment of prince Ferdinand, ensuing the battle : " We must either accuse the commander in chief of public cruelty, and in-
 " justice, *of which he cannot be suspected,*
 " or we must conclude that the commander
 " of the right wing was in fault."

Far be it from me to assert any thing to the disadvantage of his Serene Highness the Prince of BRUNSWICK. No ; I honour him as the branch of an illustrious house ; I respect his abilities as a general ; I applaud him

as the preserver of his country: but this writer confesses, that Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE has given the best proofs, the only proof, (repeated facts) of his loyalty, courage, and understanding.

Let me then ask any impartial and sensible looker-on, whether the people of England are not more justified by the laws of reason, (supposing either to be allowable) in suspecting a man who is an utter stranger to them, of cruelty and injustice, than a man, of whose whole life they have been constant witnesses, and whose every action has contributed to fix him in their good opinion, of the most heinous crimes that can possibly stain a military character?

The good-natured insolence of that anonymous letter-writer, in pretending concern that Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE's unfortunate situation should affect an aged father, and venerable peer, is enough to raise any one's indignation, who considers in what
rank

rank there is great reason to believe the letter-writer is in.

Affected! yes, I believe he is extremely affected and concerned to find his son should have been so ill treated. But I should be glad to know who told the gentleman: whether he received his intelligence from a footman, or the laundress in the family, (though it is to be supposed even they would be better informed) that his aged father, and venerable fire, intended to give up his son's cause?

A public inquisition into Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE's conduct, will be of so great an advantage to him, that none but his enemies can wish that it should not take place. He does not design to avoid it; nay, since his arrival, has earnestly requested it. Let the public therefore suspend their judgment till it is over.

The readers, perhaps, might be glad to see what has been here offered in another

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point of view ; I shall, therefore, to shew them that it may be considered in more than one favourable light, subjoin what has been advanced on the subject by a nervous and spirited writer, in answer to the before-mentioned letter-writer.

“ Has any person of credit explained the
 “ particulars of his behaviour to which ex-
 “ ceptions has been taken ? No. Has any
 “ authentic detail of the battle been pub-
 “ lished ? No. Upon what then is the
 “ charge founded, which so fatally affects
 “ the reputation of this nobleman ?—Upon
 “ incoherent reports and clamours, raised
 “ and propagated no body knows how :
 “ upon the silence of Prince FERDINAND,
 “ who, in complimenting those officers
 “ who had signalized themselves in the
 “ action, did not include in that compli-
 “ ment a nobleman who was not engaged.
 “ By the same way of reasoning, when a
 “ man restores to the right owner a purse
 “ of money which had been dropped, and

“ re-

“ receives a compliment upon this instance
 “ of honesty, another man chancing to be
 “ present, is to be considered as a thief,
 “ because he was not likewise compliment-
 “ ed for restoring a purse which he had not
 “ found.

“ Suppose Lord GEORGE SACKVILLE
 “ had no opportunity of acting, would it
 “ not have been absurd in Prince FERDI-
 “ NAND to have complimented him upon
 “ his gallantry in the action? But our au-
 “ thor affirms, that he complimented all
 “ the other British general officers: an as-
 “ sertion utterly false: he did not mention
 “ the generals ELLIOT and MOSTYN, men
 “ whose characters were never impeached;
 “ yet by the expostulator's way of arguing,
 “ they too must be deemed guilty.

“ What our author seems to lay great
 “ stress upon, is the compliment paid to
 “ the Marquis of GRANBY, importing,
 E 2 “ that

“ that if he had been at the head of the
“ British cavalry, the victory would have
“ been more brilliant. This, no doubt,
“ implies a sarcasm upon him who did
“ command the British cavalry; but surely
“ does not amount to a positive charge. If
“ he thought him guilty, why did not he
“ speak his sentiments freely? Why did
“ not he put him in arrest, and prefer a
“ formal complaint against him to his sove-
“ reign? We have the most profound re-
“ spect for that gallant prince, whom we
“ consider as one of the ablest generals,
“ and one of the best men that Germany,
“ fruitful in both, has ever produced: but
“ no man whatever is altogether exempted
“ from human frailties. In the hurry of
“ his spirits he might have uttered an harsh
“ expression from misapprehension, misin-
“ formation, passion, and disappointment.”

I am convinced to what great disadvan-
tage my poor performance must appear,
by joining this extract with it: but I hope
my

my attempt to stop the current of scurrility, and dispel the mist of error and misconception, which have risen between the public and a person no way deserving of their resentment, will be, at least, considered as excusable in itself, though ill executed; and it is not my design, in this address, to prove myself a good writer, but an honest Man.

F I N I S.